

Audumbara Vrat



The Audumbar tree (*Ficus racemosa*) is a 24-hour oxygen generator and cannot be planted manually. It grows on its own mainly through droppings of birds which have eaten the fruits.

- Audumbar tree is associated with Guru Dattatreya, one of the main Hindu deities. Cutting or dishonoring the tree in any way is considered a sin and thus it has always been protected.
- The Audumbar vriksha or cluster fig tree is a variety of fig-tree held sacred in India. It is said to flower at intervals of long centuries. It is a large tree that provides dense shade and edible fruit. Devotees of Lord Dattatreya preferably observe their penance (reading of sacred books, meditation etc.,) under this tree. Dried twigs of this tree are used in Homam.
- Its leaves are commonly used as cattle fodder. Dattatreya and his five principal avatars reside in an audumbara vriksha. Audumbara tree which is the favourite of Lord Dattatreya is used for the deeksha. Audumbar deeksha is a Mukthi deeksha. Mukthi deeksha in Hindu philosophy is said to be a transfer of divine energy from a Guru to a disciple.

Audumbara Deeksha gives Ashta Siddhi and the desires/wishes of the devotees who perform this deeksha with full dedicated devotion to Lord Dattatreya, are fulfilled. This Deeksha is practiced from the time of Eknath Panth. The Deeksha should be taken only under the guidance of a proper Guru. If one is blessed with Deeksha from a Guru, he/she must do it according to the guidelines prescribed by the Guru only. Generally Datta Deeksha is started and ended in a Datta kshetra or Datta temple.

Many experiences have been recorded of devotees who have taken this deeksha and who have had fulfillment of their desires/wishes like Marriage, Putra Santhaana, Improvement of financial status, Business development, Curing of health problems, Education and success in Examinations, Securing a Job, Clearing of genuine legal affairs and so on. The deeksha can be taken by anyone irrespective of the age, caste, creed and marital status. This Audumbar/Datta deeksha is highly recommended,

BENEFITS OF DEEKSHA

- **Deeksha** means a period of sincere austerity toward a particular deity by concentrating all vital energies only for that deity.
- In Kaliyuga it is not possible to worship all time so the purpose of such **Deekshas** become all the more important in rejuvenating one's spiritual aura and energy levels and also provides immense benefits without taking too much time.
- **Deeksha** is the transfer of the Sacred Golden Energy of Divine Grace, which descends and initiates the journey into higher states of consciousness.
- **Deeksha** can also be seen as Divine surgery for brain where there is a process of transformation in the parietal lobes (in the region of the temple) and an activation of the frontal lobes(front of the brain) which results in :
 - the experience of non-separation,
 - the experience of unconditional love, joy, and peace,
 - which will eventually lead to enlightenment and Oneness.
- **Deeksha** does not belong to any religion, or any particular belief or spiritual path

DURATION

- 40 Days deeksha is called "Mahadeeksha".
- It is also believed and testimonialized by many devotees that one who takes up this Mahadeeksha for 16 years will get the Darshan of Dattatreya at the end of the 16th year.
- One point to note here: *If one decides on a particular duration, one must stick to it and not change as it is a holy promise.*
- Women can do the Deeksha but during the period they are indisposed, they have to abstain from the Deeksha and then resume (if they have taken 40-day Deeksha Sankalpa). Women generally do two 16-day deekshas per year or one 21 days deekshas to avoid this problem

For year 2017, Deeksha schedule is as follows:

- 40 DAYS: Starting 25TH OCTOBER 2017
- 21 DAYS: Starting 13TH NOVEMBER 2017
- 16 DAYS: Starting 18th NOVEMBER 2017
- 14 DAYS: Starting 20th NOVEMBER 2017
- 7 DAYS: Starting 27TH NOVEMBER 2017

Mantra recitation for the Vrat:

Om Udumbara Mahavriksha

Dattatreya Samashritha

Nrusimhasyorthiharana

Mama kashta nivaraya

- One must also carry a **"Mudupu"** and it is normally done to request the Lord to fulfill the wishes of the devotee and make the mind free of desires.

- The **Mudupu** should contain:

- ✓ Number of coins equivalent to the number of days of Deeksha Vrat – preferably in different coins -- *leaving behind thoughts of money.*
- ✓ Big Sugar Candy(large Sugar Crystal) -- *Leaving behind thoughts of hunger and taste.*
- ✓ Ghee (small packet) -- *Leaving behind thoughts of Deha-poshana (feeding the body).*
- ✓ Dry coconut (copra) – *leaving behind egoistical thoughts.*
- ✓ Some offer uncooked rice -- *Symbolizing extreme renunciation and just sticking to Datta-Nama*

These should be offered as 'Mahaprasadam' to the Lord at the end of the Deeksha period.

These materials will then be sanctified and blessed by Lord Dattatreya and when they are imbibed by the devotee and his/her family, all desires(needs) are fulfilled.

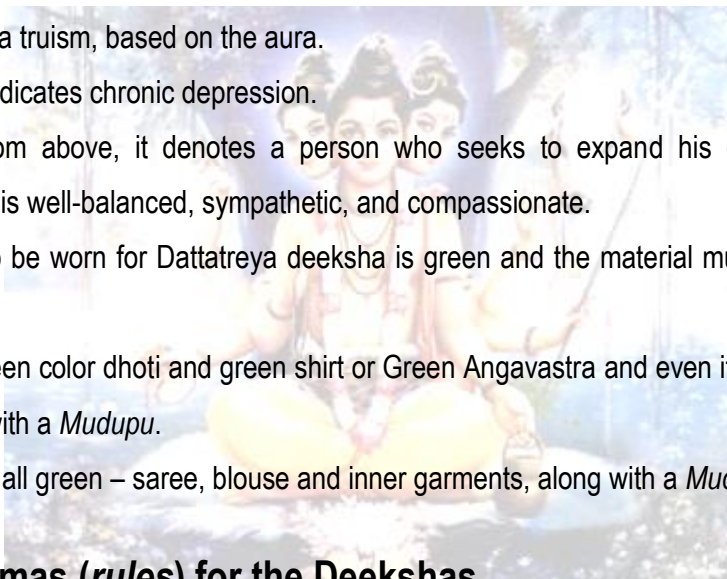
Deeksha Vastram

Deeksha Vastram means the dress to be worn during the deeksha period. Wearing a Deeksha Vastra has the following benefits:

- A particular sense of belonging to the Lord.
- Healing effect of the color.
- Grace of the presiding lord appreciating the devotee's efforts to please Him/ Her.
- Discipline and Austerity.

SIGNIFICANCE OF GREEN DEEKSHA VASTRAM

- Deeksha vastram for Audumbar deeksha is green. The significance of the color is that it is the color of the leaf of the Audumbara tree.
- Green being a healing color and a color of abundance, it is most conducive for both spiritual and material progress. Green also has disinfectant and purifying properties.
- Green is mid-way within the color spectrum; therefore, it is the color of balance and harmony. It is also the color of the soul, reflecting the fact that the soul is the liaison between the spirit and the earthly/bodily personality.
- Because green is midway in the color spectrum, it can very easily be influenced by higher and lower aspects of the person. When green is dragged down within the aura and appears murky, it indicates a person who is rather jealous of what others have, is possessive, selfish, cunning and manipulative.
- **"Green with envy"** is a truism, based on the aura.
- A very murky green indicates chronic depression.
- When illuminated from above, it denotes a person who seeks to expand his or her own general sense of individuality, one who is well-balanced, sympathetic, and compassionate.
- Therefore the color to be worn for Dattatreya deeksha is green and the material must be a simple cotton or linen (not silk or synthetic)
- Men: Should wear green color dhoti and green shirt or Green Angavastra and even if a shirt is worn, a green cotton shawl must be worn with a *Mudupu*.
- Women: Should wear all green – saree, blouse and inner garments, along with a *Mudupu*.



Important Niyamas (rules) for the Deekshas

"Niyamas' means the rules for the union of the soul to the Lord.

1. Man and women should not indulge in Khsura karmas (clipping hair, nails, etc").
 - ❖ *The spiritual energies flow to the extremities and thus removing them will impede the flow.*
 - ❖ *and divert one's mind to thoughts of beautification of one's body and hence of ego.*
2. Brahmacharyam must be practiced by both the sexes.
3. Tobacco and allied products should not be taken
4. The houses where there is a death/birth is not suitable for the performance of this Deeksha.

If one takes Deeksha and then, the above events occur then the deeksha must be stopped.

5. Puja can be done with different flowers and leaves (if possible with Audumbara leaves also).

- It must be done at least twice daily(*morning and evening*).
- The number of days of the deeksha , so many wicks (la meche) must be kept available for the lamp and changed daily

6. One must take twice daily cold water head bath (Not even tepid water except for medical reasons).

- 7. The root or a small branch of the fig tree(Oudumbara vruksha) is always kept near to ones body, in any manner, to represent renunciation (temporary) from worldly activities (some even tie the mudupu to this branch)

- 8. One must sleep either on bare floor (which is most beneficial) or just a simple white cloth near the prayer room in the house away from bedroom.(And sleeping on right side to control erotic dreams)

- 9.Ekabhojanam --- Having full-meals just once per day (those who have health problems can take something twice per day but it must be limited to fruits and milk)

- 10. There must be strong determination to refrain from consumption of wine, non-vegetarian food, eggs, onions, garlic, chillies, tobacco and other narcotic drugs, salt, sour items,spicy items.

- One should not consume smoked, roasted, boiled vegetables like potatoes, Khanda, (tubers in general)

- Some fruits might have some characteristics which are in the above list like sourness,saltiness,etc-They can be taken as "Datta-prasadam".

- When going to any Marriage reception or Bhojanam one must refrain from consuming the above items and can restrict oneself to a simple diet.

Deeksha Guru, if present, will be most apt but one may start the deeksha considering some human figure as their deeksha guru ,in our case Gurudev and placing his photo with faith and devotion in the puja altar

- Datta-stavam or Datta stotra or any other Mala mantra or Vajra kavacha must be chanted 9 or 27 times every day during deeksha duration.(Those who are unable to do this must at least listen to the chant at least 9 times when it is being chanted by someone)

- Sri Guru Charitra Parayana must be completed during this period-**This is essential (it can be in any language)**

- Datta-Homam in a Shastriac manner with Ksheera Tarpana(milk offering) is done at the end of the Deeksha

We would suggest that the following parayan be done, in the same appended sequence : Guru Charitra , SriPad Srivallabhad Charitram, Alkakot Maharaj , Sai Charitram . Reading of Guru CharitraSaar as per available time. Daily readingof Guru Gita. Those in advance stage may also read 'Avadhuta Gita".

Attitude for Vrat

- Pleasant manners and sweet speech during the deeksha period and one should address everyone as Datta (when addressing gents) or Dattama/Datta-Amma (when addressing ladies)

If anyone abuses the deeksha devotee, the devotee must refrain from retorting back and must quickly vacate that place and chant : "**Jayagurudeva Datta~Sree gurudeva Datta.**"

and

must forgive that person wholeheartedly. If one cannot do this then the whole purpose of the deeksha is null and void.

Deeksha Viramam --- Successful completion of the Deeksha and finishing touches:

- The **Mudupu** which was tied in the beginning of the deeksha must be given as Ahuthi in the Homakunda where Datta-Homam is being conducted.

This is called Poornahuthi and is done at the end of the Homam using the Dattatreya Moola Mantram.

- On the last day till the Mudupu is given to the priest or put into the Poornahuthi, one should fast (Uposhanam)

